

## EDITORIAL

The whole world knows that China considers the Falun Gong as an evil cult, but it is not the only cult banned either by the General Office of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, or by the General Office of the State Council and the Ministry of Public Security.

This issue of *Tripod* contains China's latest document related to religion. It is entitled "Identifying and Banning of Cultic Organizations — A Document from Public Security Ministry." This document sets up precise conditions for identifying and banning cults. According to the document any organization with any of the following characteristics is to be defined as a cult:

- a) Those that set up illegal organizations in the name of religion, Qigong, etc.
- b) Those who deify their leaders.
- c) Those that initiate and spread superstitions and heterodox beliefs.
- d) Those that utilize various means to fabricate and spread superstitious and heterodox [or cultic] beliefs to raise doubts and deceive the people, recruit and control its members by various means.
- e) Those who engage in disturbing social order in an organized manner that brings injury to the lives and properties of the citizens.

The Public Security Offices at all levels have been given the responsibility of identifying and naming any group that engages in one or more of the activities listed above.

Under the vigilant eye of the Public Security Bureaus, any organization suspected of being involved in these "illegal" activities soon finds itself under investigation by the PSB which then collects "criminal" evidence. After collecting the "evidence" the relevant PSB sends a report to a higher level Public Security Bureau until it reaches the national level. Any organization defined as a cult is in for some rough treatment. The local authorities where the cult functions has the unenviable job of confiscating, according to law, all of the

“cult’s” assets, properties, goods, and tools. The houses used for cult activities are sealed off, and also confiscated according to law. Cult organizers, directors, activity planners and core members are branded as criminals with criminal responsibility. There is mercy only for those who surrender voluntarily and perform meritorious services, or those that the PSB considers may have been deceived or coerced into participating in the cultic activities. These may possibly escape punishment.

The PSB conducts a program of education to inform ordinary people of the dangers of cults and to help them resist cultic control and influence.

Below is a list of 14 organizations, other than Falun Gong, designated as cults in China.

1. The Shouters (also called "Church of God" or "Local Assembly")
2. Association of Disciples (also called "The Narrow Gate in the Wilderness")
3. The All Sphere Church
4. The Spirit-Spirit Sect (also called "Spiritual Religion" or "the Spirit Sect")
5. New Testament Church (also called "Christian Charismatic Evangelistic Band")
6. Guanyin Famen (also called "The Way of the Goddess of Mercy")
7. Lord God Sect
8. The Established King
9. Unification Church (also called "Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity")
10. Three Kinds of Servants Sect
11. The Immortal Real Buddha Sect
12. The Children of God (also called "The Family of Love")
13. Damin Mission
14. "World Elijah Evangelical Mission" Sect (its current name "Elijah Ten Commandments Stone Country Korean Farmers Salvation Association")